

STAGE NOVELTIES OF A DAY.

"A DOLL'S HOUSE" MATINEE—NEW FARE AT THE IRVING PLACE.

The Nora Helmer of France Hamilton a Very Naïve Lark—Sympathetic Crowd of Women at a Very Bad Performance—No Dull Moments in "The Detective."

"In the Springtime" sings Albert Brunning in "The Darling of the Gods." Mr. Belasco's leading tenor came all the way from Philadelphia yesterday to play Dr. Rank in "A Doll's House" matinee, at the Manhattan Theatre. He did not sing the duet penned by Composer Furst. But if he had here are the words he should have substituted:

In the springtime there is always an ambitious girl who insists upon attacking Shakespeare or Ibsen—because of their venerable age both defenceless authors.

Of late years, in the springtime the Norwegian dramatist has been the victim of the dubious and unwholesome longings. It was not springlike in the open air yesterday; nevertheless, the one unfeeling winter harbingers was at hand; a new Nora Helmer who could not act the role.

Now, ambition is laudable. We see tragedians attempt light comedy and pass the matter over with a shake of the head. Mr. Gillette contemplates Hamlet. Calvé has spoken covetously of Kismet—where's the harm? Both Sherlock Holmes and Carmen-Santuzza have mastered the finger exercises of their craft. They can finger glibly its scales, pass with ease over its brilliant arpeggios. But it is always the amateur who insists upon playing Nora or Juliet or Beethoven's Sonata Appassionata. Why? Where is the family stricken from the advisers of the rash young person? Much knotted psychology is there in the answer.

Miss France Hamilton was the Scandinavian Frau-Frou yesterday. Such was the interest in this play that the Manhattan Theatre was really crowded. The young lady is an actress who has been seen in one of Sakur's Geisha in "The Darling of the Gods." She skipped with ease from Japan to Norway, but evidently caught a cold in transit, for she was the most nasal Nora we have ever heard. When Janet Achurch presented the character one hot night some ten years ago at the Madison Square Theatre she called her "dame" and "Nora" she was so large, so humid, so motherly. Miss Hamilton, therefore, must be content to be known as a nasal songbird.

Otherwise she was differently but not without personal allurements or technical address. The stage management was a sequence of unfortunate blunders. A large intense conventional scheme was adopted with the result that Miss France's voice hardly carried across the footlights; there were so many other awkward attempts that they cannot be detailed. The gait of the piece was solemn; the third act very bad. John Kellard as Krogstad and Viola Fortescue as Mrs. Linde were real enough. Nora was played by a young actress, Rejane, Anchor, Mrs. Fiske, to mention some great Noras, it is a pity that Miss Hamilton's wonderful little play should have become the stepping stone of giggling girls and fustian looking men.

There was applause and—inexplicable stage direction again—several of the principals were allowed to reappear. When the play was in full current, and bow their acknowledgements. For Wagner and Ibsen stern tradition forbids such interruptions in the middle of a scene. Then as Browning once was, is still the sport of the deadly amateur. William Archer's translation was, in the main, adhered to on the above occasion, but the scene was absolutely missing and the tense situation contrived by Ibsen with so much technical cunning melted away in the general monotony of the play.

Drab as Ibsen, bleak, austere—call him what you will—his plays act beautifully when they are not acted badly. Unluckily, we are usually given a Nora who is either a cerebral monster or a grinning idiot. She is neither one nor the other, as many great artists have proved.

"The Detective," a four act farce by Ernst Gettke and Victor Leon, was produced at the Irving Place Theatre last evening before a crowded house that roared itself into a state bordering on exhaustion. The idea is mistaken identities and gnarled situations as old as the garden of Eden.

And yet every time it is treated with an approach to freshness, the play is bound to be a success. Such was the case here. The authors have brought together many familiar types—the jealous, excitable husband, the elderly roue, the mischief making old woman and several youthful lunatics, mixed them well together in a detective bureau with a lot of doors, doors and dialogues are the pivots of the play, and the result is sheer fun, mechanically manufactured, yet fun of the broadest sort. In fact, the quality of the speeches was amazingly in advance of their logic.

As played with the nimbleness of the Comedians "The Detective" was all it should have been. Seyffertitz, the lath-like Gustav, with the wicked chuckle and still wickered legs, was the chief sinner in the little play. He did not use type Arias, was his stage wife and she proved as comical as in "Man Superfluous."

Richard Schlagerhammer, Bertha, Tocco, Muriel Hope, Fred, and the other players were all acted with hearty accord and speed. Speed, quick wit and lack of in our American transcriptions of such comedies.

Parsifal Burgstaller and Stage Manager Anton Fuchs of the Metropolitan Opera House, sat in the audience. So did Leo Dietrichstein. We hope to see "The Detective" soon in English clothes. The third act, disrobing will be the clue to a hit on upper Broadway—a disrobing, he it understood, that was managed with much tact last night.

FIVE TOO YOUNG TO ACT.

Mayor Denes a Mother's Application to Put Her Babies on the Stage.

Mayor McClellan denied yesterday the application of a woman who wanted permits for her four-year-old boy and five-year-old girl to appear on the stage in a performance of Ibsen's "A Doll's House."

"They are too young," said the Mayor.

Quick Change by a Chorus Understudy.

Grace Belmont who is playing *Ninon* in "Sergeant Kitty" at Daly's, was ill when she went on the stage last night, and was obliged to leave in the middle of a song. Victoria Stewart, her understudy, stepped out of the chorus, picked up the song and continued in the part during the rest of the performance.

"Candida" for a Kindergarten Benefit.

At \$10 an orchestra seat, the Hudson Theatre was completely sold out yesterday afternoon at the benefit performance of "Candida" given by Arnold Daly for the New York Kindergarten Association. Bishop and Mrs. Potter occupied a box. A second benefit will be given on Feb. 9.

Robert Edson's Playlet Named.

Robert Edson's one-act play to be given for the benefit for the Actors' Church Alliance on Friday afternoon at the Manhattan Theatre is called "A New Alliance."

Mr. Edson will play the role of a young actor.

Jim the Button Man to Build Again.

J. Clarence Davies & Co. have sold for the Young Men's Christian Union to Mayer B. Rosenberg a plot at the southeast corner of Westchester and Bergen avenues. Mr. Bimberg intends to build a theatre on the property.

MAY ASK ANDREWS TO RESIGN.

Nebraska Populists Angry Over His Friendship for Rockefeller.

LINCOLN, Feb. 2.—For the second time in the career of Chancellor Andrews of the University of Nebraska he is threatened with dismissal on account of corporate friendship for Rockefeller.

The crusade against the Rockefeller contribution for a building at the State University has now reached a stage where the opponents of the bequest will ask for the resignation of Chancellor Andrews and the members of the Board of Regents who favor the contribution.

The Omaha *World-Herald* has taken the initiative and the matter will be brought before the State convention of each party if the enemies of Rockefeller carry out their plans.

The Populists have already expressed their disapproval of the two regents, Von Forell and Kenower, whose terms have just expired, by refusing to renominate them. It is proposed to give the regents' positions to the State convention.

"The agitator will surely call the Chancellor his position," said a Populist leader. "He is an able man, but his love for Rockefeller is a menace to Nebraska's public school system, and he must not be allowed to continue in his policy without an emphatic protest from the people of the State, who exorcise Rockefeller and despise his orders."

ORDERED FROM ZION CITY.

Musical Director and Organist Looked Kindly at Each Other and Must Go.

CHICAGO, Feb. 2.—"Making eyes" of the kind known as "goo-goo" has been strictly forbidden in Zion City by Order of J. G. Speicher, and he has banished two persons who he considers looked at one another without sufficient severity in their gaze. As a consequence Bert M. Rice, chief director of Zion's music and of the choir, and Miss Mason, the organist, are preparing to leave the model city.

They are not doing so, however, without a storm of protest from their friends, who think that over-seer Speicher is too harsh. It is pointed out that Dr. Dore himself will not be pleased, because both Mr. Rice and Miss Mason are his particular protégés. Rice has a wife and eight children in Zion.

OPERA PLANS THROWN AWRY.

The New Tenor is Late in Arriving—Programmes for Next Week.

The failure of the Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse to reach New York early yesterday put the repertoire of next week's opera into some doubt. Fran Naval, the new tenor, was to have made his debut next Monday in "Die Weisse Dame." Yesterday the final rehearsal was to be held, but it had to be called off because the tenor did not arrive, and it was now doubtful if he would be given on Monday. Mmes. Gadeki, Seygard and Homer and MM. Reiss and Blasse are to take part in the revival of Boieldieu's opera, which has not been heard here in years.

On Wednesday Mmes. Semblich and Signor Caruso will appear for the last time this season in Lucia di Lammermoor. On Thursday Signor Caruso sails for Europe. With them will sing MM. Campanari, Journe and Bars.

It is expected, although not definitely announced, that the new scheme will be able to make a public appearance next Friday evening in Delibes's "Coppelia." The strains of this ballet have for the general monotony of the play.

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IN THE WORLD OF MUSIC.

THE KNEISEL QUARTET HEARD AT MENDELSSOHN HALL.

Cesar Franck's Piano Quintet—A Work of Which Frenchmen Write in Hyperbole—Ferreus Buisson, the Pianist, Assists the Quartet Players.

The last but one of the Kneisel Quartet concerts for the present season drew a large audience at Mendelssohn Hall last night. It called out all the habitual lovers of chamber music. It even called from his mysterious retreat one Rafael Joseffy, who could and if he would. But he won't.

It was a happy audience, made glad at the beginning by Beethoven and cheerful at the end by Haydn. In the middle of things, as the ancients used to say, stood a composition of Cesar Franck, and while that was pulsating on the air the audience had to put on its thinking cap and try to make up its mind whether it was glad or sorry.

The work of Franck heard last night was his quintet in F minor, string quartet and piano. This quintet was written in 1879. It has inspired French commentators to much warmth of utterance, some of which is certainly deserved. For instance, Ernest Chausson says:

"We are plunged into a very torrent of tangled and delightful harmonies. The composer does not hesitate to employ all keys, major and minor, and all progressions. But below all this luxuriance there is a scheme, both finely conceived and logical. The work is ornate, yet there is no blurring of outline. The impression of unity is complete and the leading motive of the andante is one of the most touching, one of the most penetrating ever written."

This is excellent as far as it goes. Franck's harmonic plan in this work is beautiful and full of unexpected changes charged with poetic feeling. His openings are wonderfully clear in atmospheric effect in each movement. They establish moods with persuasive insinuation. They seek with melodic opulence. But does the work have the quality of a new discovery? It alone makes logical development and organic unity? There is room for suspicion that in much of the work Franck was laboring with unsatisfied aspirations. He seems never to reach his goal.

But his compatriots appear to understand him. Harken to the song of Georges Perle: "I cannot say that the work is in which the inspiration is sustained at so high a level, or in which the balance between the three parts is so admirably maintained. The work is drawn, an amazing oneness by the means of a phrase repeated in both andante and finale, after a long-drawn development in the opening allegro—a phrase which hovers over the whole work as an overmastering idea and by its form suggests aspiration toward the infinite."

No one ever said anything like that about the "idée fixe" of Berlioz. It had no aspirations toward the Infinite. Furthermore, Beethoven's last quartets were more active and more novel than Franck's quintet, and surely M. Perle might have found some well sustained inspiration in them. But the French work of Franck bids fair to take its place beside the perennial Liszt controversy.

Meanwhile, the truth, as usual, lies between the two extremes. The quintet is an excellent work, uneven in merit, but without genuine and striking beauties, but by no means clear in purpose—at least in the first movement. It is not a work in time, and learn either that its purpose was finer than our present mortal vision, or that there was not any purpose at all, and that the composer was just having troubles of his own to find his way out of his tangle of wild harmonies.

The composition was capably played last night by the Kneisel Quartet and Ferreus Buisson, the pianist. Mr. Buisson showed discretion in his dynamics and intelligent appreciation of the music. The ensemble was excellent. The work of Franck's tone was suffering somewhat from the caprices of the weather. The Beethoven number was the quartet in B flat, opus 18, no. 6, in which the Kneisel Quartet was to this observer to have something more definite to say than the whole of M. Franck's work, and the Haydn selection was the G minor quartet, opus 74, no. 3. Both were well played.

MR. FRANK'S OLD MUSIC.

Isouard, Philidor, Sarti and Haydn Were Represented Yesterday.

The second concert of Samuel Franck's fourth season of entertainments of old music took place yesterday afternoon at the Lyceum Theatre. As usual the programme contained several more or less aged numbers not at all known to the present generation of concertgoers. The pieces heard yesterday were written by composers who lived between 1728 and 1818. The first writer on the programme was the latest in point of time, namely, Haydn, who was represented by the overture and the vocal round "Non, je ne veux pas chanter" from his opera "Le Billet de Loterie."

A thoroughly charming air the round is, too, happy in conception and exquisite in execution. Adele, the heroine of the opera, being asked to sing, vows that she does not wish to, and then demonstrates that she is not a novice in the art of aria, a romance and a bit of bravura, always returning to her original theme of "I don't wish to sing."

This number was sung by Mme. Anna Arnould, who disclosed a light soprano voice of pretty quality, a characteristic French style, true intonation, facility in coloratura and a charming taste. In an air from Sarti's "Fra i Due Litiganti," Arnould was less successful. Her French was not quite equal to the mellifluous flow of this lyric bit.

A suite of dances from the opera "Erneste, Princess of Norway," by the celebrated chess player and composer, Philidor, was further success. The first of these dances was a minuet, and the second a waltz. This cheerful composition of ballet music dated from 1767. Without doubt Philidor's mind was busy with chess problems when he wrote the first of these dances. The waltz, however, was a game of kings. They are, however, very light, and therein they have the advantage of the game.

Doubtless between the third and fourth movements Philidor had invented one of those strategic traps called a queen's gambit (inverted) or a "bishop's move." This cheerful composition of ballet music dated from 1767. Without doubt Philidor's mind was busy with chess problems when he wrote the first of these dances. The waltz, however, was a game of kings. They are, however, very light, and therein they have the advantage of the game.

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BOOKS AND BOOKMAKING.

A feature of the spring book announcements is the thoroughness with which authors and publishers have been shuffled.

There was a time when the young author who made his reputation through a certain firm clung to that firm, and the tradition lingers among certain conservative folk; but the up-to-date game of authors appears to be closely akin to that of the model. "Button, button, who's got the button?"

The author of one or two successful books is serenaded with siren songs; and, being human, spends anxious hours in figuring out royalties according to various scales, and yields to the fascination of the "demon" total that looms largest.

There is an oft quoted proverb concerning rolling stones that may perhaps apply in literature as elsewhere, and in the long run, the most generous by continuous and cordial relations with a good firm may be worth more than royalties standing for floating and superficial values; but the modern author believes in quick returns rather than in corridor of time echoes.

Possibly some of the lightning changes result from lack of real consideration on the part of the original publishers, but who can tell? Let each have the benefit of the doubt.

These same spring announcements, which are not coming thick and fast, are encouraging things and the average level of the coming books promises to be high.

History, memoirs, sociology, economics, travels, science, art, are all represented, and of fiction there is to be the usual spring flood, while of making new editions of the classics there is no end.

The success of the recently published "Love Affairs of Mary Queen of Scots" to which another testimonial to the interest which that most fascinating of Queens inspires in the general public. Maurice Hewlett's new novel "The Queen's Quair" is written around this same ill-fated Mary Stuart.

Lafcello Hearn's new book, "Kwaidan," deals with Japanese ghosts, goblins and fairies. Mr. Hearn, who is known in Japan as Lafcello Hearn, has, as we know, appeared from Tokyo and nothing is known of his whereabouts, but as he has often gone into retreat no anxiety about him is felt.

Apocryphal of things Japanese, Onoto Watanna has finished a new story of love and romance in Japan, and the book will be published under the title of "Daughters of Nijo."

The first volumes of a new and delightful edition of Thackeray have been issued by Charles Scribner's Sons, "Vanity Fair" being chosen to lead the way.

Dr. Thomas Dixon says that he has finished his last lecture tour and in the future will give all his time to writing.

The "Confessions of a Wife" had practically dropped out of public discussion when some one recently revived interest in the book by advancing the theory that Anne Douglas Sedgwick wrote it, and that her last story, "A Suicidal Comedy," offered proof of the fact.

Admirers of Miss Sedgwick protest that this story proves conclusively that she has a keen sense of humor—which may at times be directed against her own sex. Wages, and that no author possessed of even the shadow of humor could have perpetrated the "Confessions."

Cale Young Rice, who deserves better than that he should be described as the husband of the author of "The Wife," and who has achieved some reputation as a poet and novelist, is to publish this spring a long dramatic poem entitled "David."

Henry Harland was not born in Russia, despite the fact that "Who's Who" declares that he presented St. Petersburg to him as a birthplace. The legal records declare that he was born in Brooklyn, but Mr. Harland insists that he prefers to have been born in Norwich, Conn., because he particularly likes the place, and surely a matter of fact shouldn't be allowed to hamper a writer of fiction in the choice of a birthplace.

O. Henry, who is Sydney Porter in real life, has gone to "The Walrus and the Carpenter" for the title of his novel of Central America, which he calls "Cabbages and Kings." This is Mr. Porter's first long story, although his short stories have won for him one of the meteoric successes of the past year.

And when one begins to talk of meteoric successes, of young authors who appear to arrive at popularity in traditional Minerva fashion, "full armed," there is Myra Kelly.

Miss Kelly has struck a new vein of humor and sentiment in Bernard Shaw fashion, and has turned up a new East Side dialect, but to appreciate that dialect one must hear her talk it, in a voice that has in it suggestions of her Celtic temperament and just the most delicious evanescent hint of a brogue—for she was born in Ireland.

In point of fact there is one thing more amusing than reading one of Myra Kelly's stories, and that is seeing Myra Kelly tell her stories. It is in thousand pills that she cannot be syndicated.

Two of the books announced in advance have direct bearing upon the modern family relation and home spirit, but the two pieces of work are of character vastly different.

Charles Wagner, author of "The Simple Life," is to publish a book which bears the title of "By the Fireside," and is an earnest plea for the preservation of the family spirit, "though our modern homes be as vacant as the vana of gypsies."

Mrs. John Van Vorst also has an argument in favor of the old family and social traditions and is making it the basis for her novel.

Conditions are responsible for the social conditions in our country. The men are too busy making money to bother about the women, and the women are too busy with their own lives to bother about the men. Hence the new woman and the new novel.

Since the publication of the "Woman Who Toils" Mrs. Van Vorst has, by the way, had an enviable position in Paris, an experience to live the life of many young women into the paths of psychology. She was taken up by the Academy, set, a contributor to the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, and she has been called in French and German and an earlier novel has appeared in the *Journal des Debats*.

What daughter of Eve would not spend a few weeks in a factory for